

PHILOSOPHY 1332: ENGINEERING ETHICS

SPRING 2023

Instructor

Matthew Willis

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Meeting Location & Time

Mendenhall Lab 125

MWF 11:30AM - 12:25PM

Instructional Mode: In-person lecture

Office Hours: 3:00PM - 4:00PM Wednesdays, University Hall 337B

Course Description

Philosophy 1332 introduces students to both important ethical theories and a range of contemporary ethical issues that arise in the engineering profession. In the first half of this course, important normative ethical theories in the western philosophical tradition will be discussed. In the second half, a variety of ethical issues in the engineering profession will be discussed. Moreover, students will learn to construct and critically evaluate ethical arguments and also acquire knowledge of concepts of central importance to engineering ethics.

Course Texts

All required texts for this course will be provided through Carmen.

General Education Expected Learning Outcomes

GE Legacy: Cultures and Ideas

Goal: Students evaluate significant cultural phenomena and ideas in order to develop capacities for aesthetic and historical response and judgment; and interpretation and evaluation.

Expected Learning Outcomes:

1. Students analyze and interpret major forms of human thought, culture, and expression.
2. Students evaluate how ideas influence the character of human beliefs, the perception of reality, and the norms which guide human behavior.

This course fulfills these learning outcomes by introducing major normative theories about the nature of right and wrong and showing how they might be used to resolve major ethical issues.

GE New: Historical and Cultural Studies Foundation

Cultural Studies

Goal: Successful students will evaluate significant cultural phenomena and ideas to develop capacities for aesthetic and cultural response, judgment, interpretation and evaluation.

Expected Learning Outcomes:

Successful students are able to:

- 1.1B Analyze and interpret selected major forms of human thought, culture, ideas or expression.
- 1.2B Describe and analyze selected cultural phenomena and ideas across time using a diverse range of primary and secondary sources and an explicit focus on different theories and methodologies.
- 1.3B Use appropriate sources and methods to construct an integrated and comparative perspective of cultural periods, events or ideas that influence human perceptions, beliefs and behaviors.
- 1.4B Evaluate social and ethical implications in cultural studies.

Course Requirements and Grading

Weekly in-class writing (12.5%) 50 points total: Once on most weeks, students will be asked to respond (in writing) to a question posed in class.

Student presentation (12.5%) 50 points: Students will be assigned to a group of 2-3 other students and will be expected to present on a topic chosen from a list that will be provided later in the semester.

Exams (75%) 300 points: There will be two exams in this class (each worth 37.5% of your grade). Each exam will be taken remotely over Carmen and will include objective measures like multiple choice as well as subjective measures like short answer and essay questions. Additional details about the exams will follow later in the semester. The second (final) exam will not be cumulative.

Each in-class writing assignment will be collected at the end of that class day. Each exam will allow students one week to complete the assignment.

Grading Scale

- 93–100: A
- 90–92.9: A-
- 87–89.9: B+
- 83–86.9: B
- 80–82.9: B-
- 77–79.9: C+
- 73–76.9: C
- 70–72.9: C-
- 67–69.9: D+
- 60–66.9: D
- Below 60: E

Policies and Other Information

Attendance

You are expected to attend class. Our near weekly in-class writing assignments will be used in lieu of taking attendance, thus there is no percentage of your grade tied to attendance simpliciter. Nevertheless, it is crucial to your success that you attend class. If you are absent due to illness or other extenuating circumstances, please contact me and I will provide you with a recording of the missed class day.

Should in-person classes be canceled, I will notify you as to which alternative methods of teaching will be offered to ensure continuity of instruction for this class. Communication will be via Carmen.

Late Work

I cannot guarantee that I will be able to accept your late work. If you miss an assignment, it is best practice to contact me as soon as possible to increase your chances that we can come to some arrangement. However, if you experience some personal difficulty or have some extenuating circumstance, I will make every reasonable effort to accommodate you.

Contact

I highly encourage you to utilize my email if you have any questions whatsoever related to the course. I will respond to you in a timely manner, though you should not expect immediate responses during the weekend or late at night. *When emailing me, it would be immensely helpful if you could include the course name in your subject or message body.*

All assignments, readings, course adjustments, etc. will be announced through Carmen. I will also provide you with ample feedback on your assignments for this course through Carmen.

Course Technology

For help with your password, university email, Carmen, or any other technology issues, questions, or requests, contact the IT Service Desk. The IT Service Desk offers 24-hour support, seven days a week, via email and phone. Phone: 614-688-HELP (4357) Email: itservicedesk@osu.edu Self-Service and Chat support: <http://ocio.osu.edu/selfservice>

Statement about Disability Services

The university strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. In light of the current pandemic, students seeking to request COVID-related accommodations may do so through the university's request process, managed by Student Life Disability Services.

If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic, or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. SLDS contact information: slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; slds.osu.edu; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

Statement on Academic Misconduct

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term "academic misconduct" includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed;

illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>.

Mental Health Statement

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. The Ohio State University offers services to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. If you or someone you know are suffering from any of the aforementioned conditions, you can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Office of Student Life's Counseling and Consultation Service (CCS) by visiting ccs.osu.edu or calling 614- 292-5766. CCS is located on the 4th Floor of the Younkin Success Center and 10th Floor of Lincoln Tower. You can reach an on-call counselor when CCS is closed at 614- 292-5766 and 24 hour emergency help is also available through the 24/7 National Suicide Prevention Hotline at 1-800- 273-TALK or at suicidepreventionlifeline.org.

Title IX

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories (e.g., race). If you or someone you know has been sexually harassed or assaulted, you may find the appropriate resources at <http://titleix.osu.edu> or by contacting the Ohio State Title IX Coordinator, Kellie Brennan, at titleix@osu.edu.

Diversity Statement

The Ohio State University affirms the importance and value of diversity in the student body. Our programs and curricula reflect our multicultural society and global economy and seek to provide opportunities for students to learn more about persons who are different from them. We are committed to maintaining a community that recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among each member of our community; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her own potential. Discrimination against any individual based upon protected status, which is defined as age, color, disability, gender identity or expression, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status, is prohibited.

Religious Accommodations

Our inclusive environment allows for religious expression. Students requesting accommodations based on faith, religious or a spiritual belief system in regard to examinations, other academic requirements or absences, are required to provide the instructor with written notice of specific dates for which the student requests alternative accommodations at the earliest possible date. For more information about religious accommodations at Ohio State, visit odi.osu.edu/religious-accommodations.

Course Schedule

Week & Dates	Notes & Holidays	Topics	Readings
Week 1		Introduction & Moral Reasoning	Syllabus, Shafer-Landau, "Moral Reasoning", Shafer-Landau, "Moral Theory"
Week 2	No class 1/16 (MLK day)	The Threat of Relativism	Shafer-Landau, "Ethical Relativism", Rachels, "The Challenge of Cultural Relativism"
Week 3		Consequentialism	Shafer-Landau, "Consequentialism: Its Nature and Attractions", Shafer-Landau, "Consequentialism: Its Difficulties"
Week 4		Deontology	O'Neil, "A Simplified Account of Kant's Ethics", Shafer-Landau, "The Kantian Perspective: Fairness and Justice"
Week 5		Other Views	Shafer-Landau, "Virtue Ethics"
Week 6	Midterm review 2/17	Codes of Ethics	Davis, "Codes of Ethics and the Challenger", "NSPE Code of Ethics for Engineers"
<i>Midterm Exam posted on February 17th.</i>			
Week 7	No class 2/24	Engineering & the Environment	Davis, "Engineers and the Environment"
<i>Midterm Exam due on February 24th by 11:59PM.</i>			
Week 8		Whistleblowing	Duska, "Whistleblowing and Employee Loyalty", Bok, "Whistleblowing and Professional Responsibility"

Week 9		Group Responsibility	Sinnott-Armstrong, "It's Not My Fault", Nefsky, "Collective Harm and the Inefficacy Problem"
Week 10	No class (Spring Break)		
Week 11	No class 3/24	Ethics of Technology	Balabanian, "On the Presumed Neutrality of Technology", van de Poel, "An Ethical Framework for Evaluating Experimental Technology"
Week 12	Presentation instructions 3/29	Safety	Balabanian, "Controlling Technology", Dowie, "Pinto Madness"
Week 13		Safety	
Week 14		Student Presentations	
Week 15		Student Presentations	
<i>Final Exam posted on April 21st.</i>			
Week 16		Final Review 4/24	
<i>Final Exam due on April 28th by 11:59PM.</i>			